

International Public Sector Accounting Standards Adoption on the Quality of Financial Reporting

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Abstract

Purpose: As governments worldwide strive for greater transparency, accountability, and efficient use of public resources, adopting IPSAS has emerged as a pivotal step in achieving these objectives. Despite ongoing efforts to facilitate IPSAS adoption in Ghana, limited research exists on how implementing these standards has directly influenced the quality of financial reporting within specific ministries. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the impact of IPSAS implementation on the quality of financial reporting in selected ministries in Ghana.

Methodology: This study adopts a quantitative research approach, as it is best suited for evaluating the causal relationships between IPSAS adoption and improvements in financial reporting quality. It follows a positivist research philosophy based on the principle that reality is objective and can be observed and measured empirically. Purposive sampling was utilized to select a sample size of 366.

Findings: The study examined the effect of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) on transparency and accountability in financial reporting. The findings indicate a significant and positive relationship between IPSAS adoption and these aspects.

Unique Contribution to theory, practice and policy: This study contributes to the institutional theory by demonstrating how IPSAS serves as a regulatory framework that enhances compliance and governance in financial reporting. Governments and regulatory bodies should mandate the full implementation of IPSAS to ensure financial transparency. IPSAS adoption improves financial decision-making by ensuring accurate and reliable financial data.

Keywords: International Public Sector Accounting Standards Adoption; Transparency of Financial Reporting; Accountability of Financial Reporting

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The implementation of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) has garnered significant attention in recent years due to its potential to enhance the quality of financial reporting within public sector organizations. As governments worldwide strive for greater transparency, accountability, and efficient use of public resources, the adoption of IPSAS has emerged as a pivotal step in achieving these objectives (Guthrie et al., 2020). IPSAS provides a comprehensive set of accounting standards specifically tailored for the public sector, aligning it with internationally accepted financial reporting principles. This study examines the implementation of IPSAS within selected ministries and its impact on the quality of financial reporting, focusing on Ghana, a country that has embarked on reforms to strengthen public financial management (Nyah-Okpu & Emenyonu, 2021). The public sector in many countries

has faced criticisms for inefficiencies, lack of transparency, and poor financial management practices, which can hinder economic development (Mahmoud & Khaled, 2022). In response, the adoption of IPSAS seeks to address these challenges by promoting uniformity and comparability in financial reporting across ministries, departments, and agencies. In developing countries, the quality of financial reporting in the public sector has traditionally lagged behind the private sector, primarily due to outdated accounting frameworks that are not suited for the public sector's unique characteristics. IPSAS adoption, which advocates for accrual-based accounting, introduces improvements in financial decision-making and resource allocation by providing more accurate and comprehensive financial information (Chan, 2020).

Ghana's Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MoFEP) has initiated reforms aimed at ensuring the adoption of IPSAS, aligning with the country's broader public financial management reforms. These reforms aim to enhance fiscal discipline, transparency, and accountability in the use of public funds. For instance, the Controller and Accountant General's Department (CAGD) of Ghana has been actively involved in facilitating the transition to IPSAS, offering capacity-building initiatives and working towards full implementation across various ministries (Ayinde & Nwaorgu, 2021). However, challenges remain in the implementation process, including capacity gaps, resistance to change, and the complexity of shifting from cash-based to accrual-based accounting (Agyemang & Frimpong, 2023).

The quality of financial reporting plays a critical role in effective governance, as it provides stakeholders with reliable, relevant, and comparable financial information for decision-making purposes (Christiaens et al., 2021). By enhancing the reliability of financial statements, IPSAS contributes to more accurate assessments of government performance and financial health. Furthermore, the adoption of IPSAS promotes transparency by requiring detailed disclosure of assets, liabilities, and contingent liabilities, thereby increasing the accountability of public sector entities (Mokhtar & Nabhan, 2020). This is particularly crucial for ministries, where efficient allocation of public resources is essential for national development.

Studies conducted in other jurisdictions have demonstrated that the implementation of IPSAS has led to improved financial reporting quality, particularly in terms of enhanced credibility and greater comparability of financial statements across sectors (Gomes et al., 2019). In Ghana, the adoption of IPSAS is expected to yield similar outcomes, as it provides a robust framework for recognizing, measuring, and disclosing financial transactions in a way that reflects the economic reality of government activities (Adjei & Kwadwo, 2020). This study, therefore, seeks to investigate how the implementation of IPSAS in selected ministries in Ghana has influenced the quality of financial reporting, with a focus on areas such as timeliness, relevance, and comprehensiveness of financial information.

While the adoption of IPSAS presents numerous benefits, its implementation in developing countries like Ghana is not without challenges. One of the major hurdles is the lack of sufficient training and expertise among public sector accountants, which can hinder the proper application of the standards (Ali et al., 2022). Additionally, the transition to IPSAS requires substantial investment in information systems, staff training, and change management processes to ensure compliance and effective reporting. However, the long-term benefits of improved financial reporting far outweigh these challenges, as IPSAS provides an opportunity to enhance fiscal transparency, improve governance, and strengthen public trust in financial reporting. In conclusion, the implementation of IPSAS represents a significant step towards improving the quality of financial reporting in the public sector. By enhancing transparency, accountability, and comparability, IPSAS contributes to better governance and more effective use of public resources. This study will provide insights into the extent to which IPSAS has been adopted in selected ministries in Ghana and its impact on the quality of financial reporting.

1.1 Problem Statement of the Study

The quality of financial reporting in the public sector has long been a matter of concern, particularly in developing countries where outdated and inefficient accounting practices have resulted in poor fiscal management and a lack of transparency. The International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) were introduced to address these issues by providing a set of internationally accepted standards tailored specifically to public sector financial reporting.

Despite the recognized benefits of IPSAS, its implementation has faced numerous challenges, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Ghana, for instance, the transition from cash-based to accrual-based accounting through IPSAS has been marked by slow adoption, capacity issues, and insufficient infrastructure within various government ministries (Ali et al., 2022). These challenges raise questions about whether the adoption of IPSAS has had the desired impact on improving the quality of financial reporting in the public sector. The significance of financial reporting quality cannot be overstated, as it plays a crucial role in enhancing transparency, accountability, and decision-making within public sector organizations. With the introduction of IPSAS, it is expected that ministries will be better equipped to provide comprehensive, accurate, and timely financial information. However, the current state of financial reporting in Ghana's public sector suggests that there may be gaps in realizing these benefits. Studies have shown that many ministries continue to struggle with issues such as inadequate disclosure of assets, untimely financial reporting, and inconsistencies in financial statement preparation (Agyemang & Frimpong, 2023). As a result, stakeholders, including government agencies, international donors, and the general public, may be deprived of reliable information necessary for effective governance and resource allocation.

Despite ongoing efforts to facilitate IPSAS adoption in Ghana, limited research exists on how the implementation of these standards has directly influenced the quality of financial reporting within specific ministries. Understanding the extent to which IPSAS has improved or failed to improve financial reporting quality is essential for guiding future public financial management reforms. Moreover, investigating the challenges and opportunities associated with IPSAS adoption can offer valuable insights for policymakers and practitioners, particularly in developing countries where public financial management systems are still evolving (Mokhtar & Nabhan, 2020). This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the impact of IPSAS implementation on the quality of financial reporting in selected ministries in Ghana.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Concept of Financial Accountability

Accountability involves acknowledging and fulfilling one's duties, acting responsibly towards oneself and others, and being prepared to justify one's actions to others (Abimbola et al., 2017). It is often viewed as a key mechanism for ensuring both personal and institutional responsibility, applicable across public institutions, economic systems, and administrations (Ijeoma & Oghoghomeh, 2014). However, as Mutiso et al. (2015) note, non-profit organizations frequently regard traditional accountability practices as unnecessary administrative tasks, which can lead to negative organizational and managerial consequences. According to Mhaka (2014), accountability reflects the extent to which individuals believe they must use feedback to improve their performance. A robust public spending system must consider societal values and needs. Accountability, transparency, consistency, and participation are widely recognized as the four pillars of good governance. Without these, effective resource allocation or the maintenance of fiscal discipline is difficult, especially when budget administrators disregard parliamentary directives or misuse public funds for personal gain (Mhaka, 2014).

Financial accountability, in particular, focuses on assuring stakeholders that public resources are being used properly (stewardship) and supporting decision-making regarding the allocation of limited resources such as time, personnel, materials, and money (Mutiso et al., 2017). The distribution of these resources can significantly influence an organization's core operations and overall success, which are largely determined by the quality of financial management. Therefore, public organizations must report their financial activities to maintain financial accountability. This process involves holding individuals accountable for successfully executing financial tasks, which serves as a key control measure in financial management. A well-defined framework for financial responsibility is essential for ensuring efficient financial operations (Mutiso et al., 2017).

2.2 Financial Accountability Mechanisms

The study examines financial accountability mechanisms that encompass expenditure controls, financial reporting, service delivery, and budgeting. The sections below elaborate on these components.

2.2.1 Expenditure Controls

Labor and salary expenditures, along with spending on goods, services, and other recurring expenses, often exceed the approved budget, whereas development expenditures are generally underutilized. This underspending in development projects is largely attributed to capacity limitations, ineffective project execution, and occasionally a lack of information regarding donor-funded project implementation (Mutiso et al., 2017). Evaluating the reliability of government spending involves comparing the total revenue received and total expenditures to the initially approved budget, as well as analyzing specific expenditure categories against the initial budget (Ofoegbu, 2016). However, Okere et al. (2018) argue that government policies should shift towards improving the quality of public spending when resources permit, as constraints frequently stem from inaccurate financial forecasts. A successful spending framework is achieved when the actual expenditure structure is compared to the pre-approved budget, allowing public institutions to predict how well the budget aligns with the declared public policies and whether it is reliable and predictable (Orlando et al., 2019).

2.2.2 Financial Reporting

Financial reporting plays a crucial role in a democratic society by fulfilling the government's responsibility to be transparently accountable. It is used to assess accountability by comparing actual financial outcomes with the approved budget, evaluating the financial condition and operational performance, ensuring compliance with financial regulations, and analyzing efficiency and effectiveness (Orlando et al., 2019). To make the management and communication of financial information less subjective, the accounting profession has developed global standards and guidelines. Oversight bodies enforce these and include frameworks like Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), International Accounting Standards (IASs), the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB), and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) (Opanyi, 2016). These standards are based on a conceptual framework that emphasizes aspects such as verifiability (the extent to which different individuals can agree on the identification and measurement of an event) and materiality (whether a transaction is significant enough to be reported) (Opanyi, 2016). The standards specify which assets and liabilities should be recognized, when such adjustments should be recorded, how to measure them, and what information needs to be disclosed. They also outline the preparation of financial statements, ensuring appropriate methods for collecting and reporting data on an institution's financial activities (Opanyi, 2016).

2.3 Theoretical Review

The implementation of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) is largely underpinned by several theoretical frameworks that explain how these standards influence the quality of financial reporting in the public sector. Among these theories are the Agency Theory, Institutional Theory, and Stakeholder Theory, which provide a comprehensive understanding of how IPSAS adoption affects financial transparency, accountability, and decision-making in the public sector.

2.3.1 Agency Theory

Agency Theory, originally developed by Jensen and Meckling (1976), is crucial to understanding the role of IPSAS in improving financial reporting quality. This theory suggests that public sector managers (agents) are accountable to the government and the public (principals). As principals cannot directly monitor the agents' actions, there is an inherent risk of information asymmetry and opportunistic behavior. IPSAS serves as a mechanism to reduce information asymmetry by standardizing financial reporting, making it easier for principals to evaluate the performance of agents. It ensures that financial reports are transparent,

comparable, and reliable, allowing stakeholders to monitor whether public sector resources are being used efficiently and effectively (Pina et al., 2019). By fostering standardized reporting practices, IPSAS minimizes the agency problem, thus improving the quality of financial information provided by public sector entities. Adopting IPSAS also contributes to financial accountability, a critical element of the agency relationship. According to Ekeatte et al. (2019), implementing IPSAS strengthens public managers' accountability by ensuring that they adhere to globally recognized accounting standards, thereby providing principals with more reliable information on how public resources are managed. This is particularly relevant in contexts where governments face scrutiny over the management of public funds, as IPSAS-compliant reports can improve trust between agents and principals.

2.3.2 Institutional Theory

Institutional Theory provides a broader lens for understanding IPSAS implementation by focusing on how public sector entities conform to established norms and regulations to gain legitimacy. According to this theory, organizations, including public sector entities, adopt practices and procedures that align with external expectations to maintain their legitimacy within society (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). The adoption of IPSAS can be seen as an institutional response to the global call for improved transparency, accountability, and governance in the public sector. Governments that implement IPSAS demonstrate their commitment to aligning with international best practices in financial reporting, thus enhancing their legitimacy in the eyes of domestic and international stakeholders (Christiaens et al., 2017).

Institutional pressures, both coercive and normative, play a significant role in IPSAS adoption. Coercive pressures arise from the demands of external bodies, such as international financial institutions and donor agencies, which often require countries to adopt IPSAS as a condition for funding or financial assistance. Normative pressures stem from the professionalization of accounting standards and practices, as public sector organizations seek to conform to the norms set by accounting bodies such as the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board (IPSASB) (Ademola et al., 2020). These institutional pressures drive governments to adopt IPSAS, thereby improving the quality of financial reporting through standardized, comparable, and transparent accounting practices.

2.3.3 Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder Theory emphasizes the importance of addressing the interests and expectations of various stakeholders in organizational decision-making. In the context of public sector financial reporting, stakeholders include the general public, international organizations, investors, and oversight bodies. According to this theory, public sector entities must adopt transparency and accountability practices to maintain stakeholder trust and confidence (Freeman, 1984). Implementing IPSAS aligns with the principles of Stakeholder Theory by improving the quality of financial reporting, making it easier for stakeholders to access, understand, and compare financial information (Van Helden et al., 2018). IPSAS-compliant reports provide a clearer and more accurate representation of public sector entities' financial position, enhancing stakeholder trust. For instance, IPSAS's accrual-based accounting system allows for the comprehensive recording of assets and liabilities, giving stakeholders a more realistic view of the government's financial health (Ekeatte et al., 2019). This improved transparency fosters greater stakeholder engagement and accountability, as public sector entities must present accurate and reliable financial information that reflects their actual performance.

Furthermore, the adoption of IPSAS has been shown to positively affect decision-making by providing stakeholders with high-quality financial reports that facilitate informed choices regarding resource allocation, budget planning, and public policy development (Brown & Pallot, 2019). This aligns with the core tenets of Stakeholder Theory, which advocates for the alignment of organizational practices with stakeholder expectations to ensure long-term sustainability and trust. The theoretical underpinnings of IPSAS implementation, drawing from Agency Theory, Institutional Theory, and Stakeholder Theory, highlight the multifaceted impact of these standards on the quality of financial reporting in the public sector. IPSAS reduces information

asymmetry between agents and principals, enhances the legitimacy of public sector entities through adherence to international norms, and fosters trust among stakeholders by improving financial transparency and accountability. As governments worldwide continue to adopt IPSAS, these theoretical frameworks provide valuable insights into how these standards can contribute to better governance and more effective management of public resources.

2.4 Empirical Review

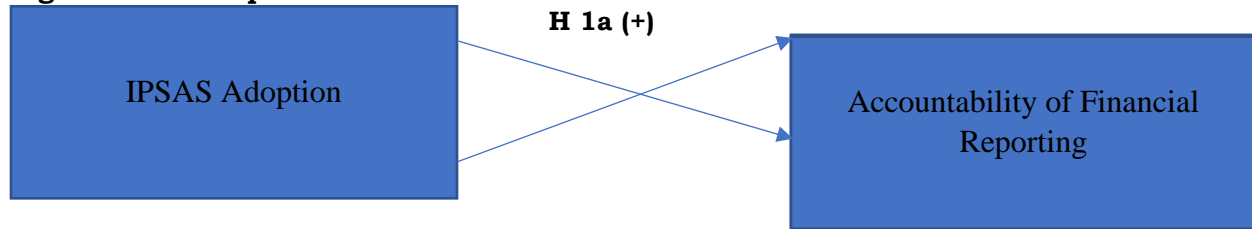
In recent years, there has been increasing attention on adopting and implementing International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). As IPSAS becomes more widely applied across both developed and developing nations, questions have arisen regarding its impact on the quality of financial reporting. Understanding how IPSAS influences the quality of public sector financial reports is crucial. This empirical review aims to critically assess existing research on the effect of IPSAS in the public sector. By synthesizing findings from a variety of studies, this review highlights the impact of IPSAS on accountability, transparency, comparability, relevance, and full representation, and identifies potential areas for future research. Adedeji (2024) explored the mediating and moderating role of contingency factors in the relationship between IPSAS adoption and financial reporting quality in Southwestern Nigeria.

The study focused on public service professionals in the region, surveying 400 respondents, including auditors and accountants. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), revealing that the quality of financial reporting under IPSAS is influenced by contingency factors in the sampled states. Elugom and Onyeka (2023) examined IPSAS's impact on public sector accountability. The researchers gathered data through questionnaires, analyzed using simple percentages, and found that IPSAS significantly enhanced accountability and transparency in public sector financial reporting. Kpara et al. (2023) focused on Edo State, Nigeria, investigating the effect of IPSAS on financial disclosure, transparency, and accountability. Using a survey design and statistical analysis, the study revealed that IPSAS significantly improved financial reporting in the public sector, particularly in terms of transparency and comparability.

John et al. (2023) explored the relationship between IPSAS implementation and financial reporting quality in Cross River State, Nigeria. Their findings indicated a significant positive correlation between IPSAS adoption and the faithful representation and reliability of financial reports. Ojeh and Eze (2023) analyzed IPSAS adoption's effect on financial reporting quality in Nigeria's public sector, using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Their study found that IPSAS adoption positively impacted financial reporting quality and compliance with IPSAS standards, leading to improved transparency and reliability. Bello et al. (2022) studied IPSAS's influence on the financial reporting quality of Nigerian public health institutions.

Their research demonstrated a strong relationship between IPSAS and improved financial reporting quality, focusing on accruals and materiality in financial statements. Tawiah and Soobaroyen (2022) examined the relationship between IPSAS adoption and government financing in developing countries. Their study revealed a significant association between IPSAS adoption and increased international financing, particularly in countries using accrual-based IPSAS. Tawiah (2022) analyzed the broader impact of IPSAS on governance quality across 107 developed and developing countries. The study found that IPSAS adoption positively influenced governance quality, particularly in developing countries, by enhancing accountability and transparency. Egolum and Ndum (2021) examined the effect of IPSAS on financial reporting quality in Anambra State, Nigeria. Their findings indicated that IPSAS adoption improved accountability, transparency, and reduced corruption among public officials.

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework



2.4.1 Relationship between IPSAS Adoption and Transparency of Financial Reporting

The adoption of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) has a significant and positive influence on the transparency and accountability of financial reporting in public sector organizations. IPSAS establishes a globally recognized framework that enhances the quality of financial information by promoting standardized accounting practices across different jurisdictions. This ensures that public financial reporting is more transparent, comparable, and accountable to stakeholders, thereby improving governance and financial oversight in the public sector. Transparency in financial reporting refers to the clarity, openness, and accessibility of financial information to stakeholders. IPSAS enhances transparency by ensuring that public sector entities provide detailed and accurate financial reports that present a true and fair view of their financial position and performance. According to Pina et al. (2019), IPSAS-compliant reports are based on accrual accounting, which offers a more comprehensive representation of financial activities by recording transactions when they occur, rather than when cash changes hands. This approach provides stakeholders with a clearer picture of the public entity's financial obligations, assets, and liabilities, thereby improving the overall transparency of financial reporting.

Additionally, IPSAS promotes uniformity in financial reporting across different public sector entities, making it easier for stakeholders to compare financial performance across regions or sectors. The standardized format mandated by IPSAS ensures that financial reports are prepared using consistent accounting principles, reducing the risk of misinterpretation and enabling more informed decision-making. As Opanyi (2016) highlights, transparency in financial reporting is a crucial factor in building trust between the government and its stakeholders, as it allows for greater scrutiny of how public funds are being utilized. IPSAS adoption, by standardizing financial reporting practices, plays a vital role in fostering this trust. The study proposes that:

H1a: The adoption of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) has a positive influence on the transparency of financial reporting in public sector organizations.

2.4.2 Relationship between IPSAS Adoption and Accountability of Financial Reporting

Accountability in financial reporting involves the obligation of public sector entities to provide accurate information on their financial operations and to justify their use of public resources to stakeholders. IPSAS adoption strengthens accountability by ensuring that public sector entities are required to prepare financial reports that comply with international standards, thereby reducing the risk of mismanagement and corruption. According to Ekeatte et al. (2019), IPSAS provides a robust framework for monitoring and evaluating the performance of public sector entities, ensuring that they are held accountable for their financial decisions. By adhering to IPSAS, public sector entities are obliged to disclose all material financial information, including liabilities, assets, and contingent obligations.

This level of detail ensures that stakeholders, including citizens, auditors, and international organisations, have access to sufficient information to evaluate whether public resources have been managed responsibly. The implementation of IPSAS also facilitates external audits by providing a standardised reporting framework that auditors can use to assess the accuracy and reliability of financial statements (Christiaens et al., 2017). This strengthens accountability by ensuring that public sector entities are held responsible for their financial actions and decisions. Furthermore, the enhanced accountability resulting from IPSAS adoption leads to improved governance and fiscal discipline in the public sector. When public sector

entities are required to adhere to international standards for financial reporting, they are less likely to engage in practices that deviate from established norms, as they are subject to greater scrutiny from both internal and external stakeholders. This contributes to more effective management of public funds and reduces the likelihood of financial mismanagement or waste. Based on the arguments presented, the study hypothesised that:

H1b: The adoption of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) has a positive influence on the accountability of financial reporting in public sector organizations.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Explanatory research design is a structured approach used to investigate causal relationships between variables, providing insight into underlying mechanisms and influences (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). In the context of this study, the explanatory research design was employed to analyze how the implementation of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) affects the quality of financial reporting. This study follows a positivist research philosophy, which is based on the principle that reality is objective and can be observed and measured through empirical means (Bryman, 2021). Positivism is appropriate for studies that seek to examine causal relationships between variables using structured methodologies, making it a suitable approach for assessing how IPSAS implementation affects financial reporting quality. By adopting this philosophy, the research ensures that findings are based on observable and quantifiable data, thereby enhancing the reliability and validity of the conclusions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

A positivist paradigm supports hypothesis testing and statistical analysis, enabling the researcher to evaluate the extent to which IPSAS adoption contributes to improvements in financial reporting accuracy, transparency, and comparability in public sector institutions (Christiaens et al., 2021). This objective approach minimizes researcher bias and allows for generalization of results across different ministries and government agencies implementing IPSAS (Lapsley, Mussari, & Paulsson, 2020). A quantitative research approach emphasizes objective measurements and statistical analysis of numerical data to understand patterns and relationships (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). Given that this study seeks to assess the impact of IPSAS on financial reporting quality using structured data, a quantitative approach ensures precision, replicability, and statistical rigor (Bell, Bryman, & Harley, 2022). By employing this approach, the study can quantify the extent to which IPSAS adoption enhances transparency, accuracy, and comparability in financial reporting across public sector institutions (Brusca, Caperchione, Cohen, & Manes-Rossi, 2020).

Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental or selective sampling, is a non-probability sampling technique in which researchers deliberately choose participants based on specific characteristics that align with the research objectives (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). In the context of this study on the implementation of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) and its impact on the quality of financial reporting, purposive sampling is utilized to select individuals and entities with direct involvement in public sector financial management. This ensures that the data collected is relevant, accurate, and meaningful for addressing the research problem.

A sample size of 366 is statistically significant for analyzing trends and patterns in IPSAS implementation across public sector institutions (Kothari, 2004). This sample size provides adequate representation of key stakeholders, including government accountants, auditors, financial managers, and policy regulators, who play a critical role in IPSAS implementation (Christiaens, Vanhee, Manes-Rossi, Aversano, & Van Cauwenberge, 2021). A larger sample size reduces the margin of error, enhancing the reliability of the study's findings (Saunders et al., 2019). A well-defined sample size allows for subgroup analysis, enabling comparisons across different levels of IPSAS adoption in various public institutions (Brusca, Caperchione, Cohen, & Manes-Rossi, 2020). A sample size of 366 respondents is justified based on statistical principles, ensuring comprehensive insights into IPSAS implementation and financial reporting quality. By selecting a diverse and representative sample, this study aims to provide reliable findings that contribute to academic knowledge and practical policy recommendations.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are crucial in ensuring the accuracy and credibility of research findings. Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of a measurement instrument over time, meaning that repeated application of the same instrument should yield similar results (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). To assess reliability, the study employed Cronbach's alpha, a widely used measure of internal consistency, where a value above 0.7 is generally considered acceptable (Hair et al., 2020). On the other hand, validity determines whether an instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). This study ensured validity through content, construct, and criterion validity. Content validity was established through expert reviews, ensuring that survey items adequately covered all aspects of the study variables (Sekaran & Bougie, 2020). Construct validity was tested using factor analysis, confirming that the items accurately represented the underlying constructs (Field, 2021). Furthermore, criterion validity was checked by comparing the study's measures with established scales used in previous research. Ensuring both reliability and validity enhances the robustness of the study findings, making them more generalizable and applicable in practice.

Table 4.2 KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Adequacy.	Measure of Sampling	.797
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1207.956
	df	66
	Sig.	.000

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test assesses the suitability of data for factor analysis by measuring the proportion of variance in the dataset that could be attributed to underlying factors. The obtained KMO value of 0.797 indicates a moderate to high level of sampling adequacy, as values above 0.70 are considered acceptable for factor analysis (Kaiser, 1974). This result suggests that the dataset is well-suited for exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and that the sample size is adequate for detecting meaningful factor structures. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity examines whether the correlation matrix of the dataset is significantly different from an identity matrix, which would indicate that the variables are interrelated and suitable for factor analysis. The test results show an approximate Chi-Square value of 1207.956 with 66 degrees of freedom (df = 66) and a significance level (Sig.) of 0.000.

Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix is rejected. This confirms that there are sufficient correlations among the variables to justify proceeding with factor analysis (Hair et al., 2020). The results of the KMO and Bartlett's Test indicate that the data is appropriate for factor analysis. The KMO value (0.797) is above the recommended threshold of 0.70, and Bartlett's Test is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), confirming that factor analysis can be meaningfully applied to identify underlying patterns in the dataset.

Table 4.3 Reliability and validity Results

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	Convergent Validity (AVE)	Discriminant Validity (DV)	Composite Reliability (CR)
IPSAS Adoption	.761	0.5805	0.762	0.8461
Transparency in Financial Reporting	.871	0.7001	0.8367	0.9024
Accountability in Financial Reporting	.899	0.741	0.861	0.919

Reliability and validity are crucial in assessing the consistency and accuracy of measurement constructs. Table 4.3 presents the results for Cronbach's Alpha, Convergent

Validity (AVE), Discriminant Validity (DV), and Composite Reliability (CR) for three constructs: IPSAS Adoption, Transparency in Financial Reporting, and Accountability in Financial Reporting. Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of internal consistency, with values above 0.70 considered acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The reliability and validity results indicate that the measurement model is both reliable and valid. All constructs exhibit strong internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha > 0.70), good convergent validity (AVE > 0.50), clear discriminant validity (DV > inter-construct correlations), and high composite reliability (CR > 0.70). This ensures that the constructs effectively capture the intended dimensions of IPSAS adoption, transparency, and accountability in financial reporting.

Table 4.4 Total Variance Explained

Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
4.021	33.506	33.506	3.071	25.589	25.589
2.465	20.545	54.050	2.933	24.441	50.030
1.884	15.703	69.753	2.367	19.724	69.753

The Total Variance Explained results confirm that three factors sufficiently explain the majority (69.753%) of the dataset's variance. The rotation redistributed the variance across the factors, improving interpretability while maintaining the overall explained variance. This indicates a strong and valid factor structure, making the extracted factors suitable for further analysis.

Table 4.5 Rotated Component Matrixa

	Component		
	1	2	3
IPSA1	-.063	.066	.799
IPSA2	.000	.007	.741
IPSA3	-.118	.092	.832
IPSA4	.011	-.108	.665
TFR1	.196	.698	.072
TFR2	.117	.895	.075
TFR3	.156	.900	.012
TFR4	.117	.838	-.125
AFR1	.848	.118	-.070
AFR2	.883	.089	.008
AFR3	.863	.183	-.011
AFR4	.848	.233	-.117

The Rotated Component Matrix presents the factor loadings after applying rotation (typically Varimax) to improve interpretability. Factor loadings indicate the strength of the relationship between each item and the extracted components. Higher absolute values (typically ≥ 0.50) suggest a strong association with the respective component (Hair et al., 2020). The Rotated Component Matrix confirms that the measurement items load onto their expected constructs with high factor loadings (≥ 0.60) and minimal cross-loadings. This validates the factor structure and supports the study's theoretical constructs of IPSAS Adoption, Transparency in Financial Reporting, and Accountability in Financial Reporting.

Table 4.6 Hypothesis Testing and Findings

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta	T value	P value	Decision
H1a	IPSA -> TFR	.451	7.118	.000	Supported
H1b	IPSA- -> AFR	.603	10.633	.000	Supported

4.2 Discussion of Results

The adoption of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) has a positive and significant effect on transparency in financial reporting, promoting accountability and trust in public financial management. IPSAS enhances the quality and reliability of financial reports by ensuring standardized accounting practices across public sector entities (Christiaens et al., 2021). By mandating accrual-based accounting, IPSAS improves the accuracy, consistency, and comparability of financial statements, thereby reducing information asymmetry and enhancing transparency (Lapsley et al., 2020). Furthermore, IPSAS adoption strengthens stakeholder confidence by providing timely and relevant financial information, which enables informed decision-making (Brusca et al., 2019). Compliance with IPSAS also minimizes the risk of financial mismanagement and corruption by establishing clear reporting guidelines and disclosure requirements (PwC, 2021). Empirical studies confirm that public institutions implementing IPSAS report higher levels of transparency, as financial statements become more accessible and understandable to auditors, regulators, and the public (Adhikari & Mellemvik, 2022). IPSAS adoption serves as a fundamental tool for improving transparency in financial reporting, ensuring that government expenditures, revenues, and liabilities are properly accounted for, thereby strengthening public trust in financial governance.

The adoption of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) has a significant positive impact on accountability in financial reporting. IPSAS enhances accountability by ensuring that financial statements are prepared based on globally accepted principles, reducing discretionary reporting and financial mismanagement (Christiaens et al., 2021). By enforcing standardized accounting practices, IPSAS improves financial oversight and ensures that public institutions are held responsible for their financial decisions (Adhikari & Mellemvik, 2020). One of the key ways IPSAS promotes accountability is by enhancing financial disclosure requirements. Public sector organizations are required to provide detailed and transparent financial statements, which allows stakeholders, including government agencies and the public, to scrutinize financial activities (PwC, 2022).

This increased transparency minimizes opportunities for fraudulent activities and strengthens internal control mechanisms (Brusca et al., 2019). Furthermore, IPSAS adoption strengthens corporate governance in public institutions by enforcing compliance with accrual-based accounting standards. This approach provides a more accurate representation of financial positions, ensuring that public funds are managed efficiently and ethically (Grossi & Steccolini, 2019). The study's findings confirmed that IPSAS adoption significantly predicts accountability in financial reporting, indicating that countries implementing IPSAS experience greater financial discipline and ethical reporting practices. IPSAS adoption serves as a powerful tool for improving accountability in financial reporting, reducing financial mismanagement, and fostering trust in public financial administration. Given its effectiveness, governments and regulatory bodies should continue to enforce IPSAS implementation to enhance accountability and governance in the public sector (Cohen & Karatzimas, 2021).

5.0 CONCLUSION

The findings of this study provide strong empirical support for the positive effect of IPSAS on both transparency and accountability in financial reporting. The adoption of IPSAS leads to greater transparency by facilitating standardized reporting practices that improve financial disclosures and enhance public confidence in financial management. Moreover, IPSAS strengthens accountability by promoting adherence to international financial reporting standards, reducing financial mismanagement, and fostering sound corporate governance. In conclusion, the study confirms that IPSAS plays a crucial role in enhancing financial reporting quality in the public sector, thereby contributing to improved governance and financial integrity. Public sector institutions and regulatory bodies should, therefore, continue to promote and enforce the adoption of IPSAS to ensure greater financial transparency and accountability.

5.1 Theoretical Contribution

This study contributes to the institutional theory by demonstrating how IPSAS serves as a regulatory framework that enhances compliance and governance in financial reporting.

Additionally, it extends the agency theory by showing how IPSAS minimizes information asymmetry between public institutions and stakeholders, fostering financial accountability and transparency. The findings provide empirical evidence supporting the positive impact of standardized accounting frameworks in the public sector.

5.2 Policy Implication

Governments and regulatory bodies should mandate the full implementation of IPSAS to ensure financial transparency. Public institutions must adopt IPSAS-compliant accounting systems to improve financial disclosures. International financial organizations should support IPSAS adoption by providing technical assistance and training for public sector accountants. Audit institutions should integrate IPSAS principles into their assessment frameworks to enhance financial monitoring and oversight.

5.3 Managerial Implication

For public sector financial managers, IPSAS adoption presents several managerial benefits: Improves financial decision-making by ensuring accurate and reliable financial data. Enhances internal control mechanisms, reducing opportunities for fraudulent activities. Strengthens financial planning and budgeting processes, ensuring efficient resource allocation. Facilitates stakeholder engagement by providing credible financial reports that enhance trust in public financial management.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends: Governments should ensure complete compliance with IPSAS to maximize its benefits on financial transparency and accountability. Public sector financial officers should undergo continuous training on IPSAS implementation and reporting standards. Government agencies should enhance audit and enforcement mechanisms to monitor IPSAS compliance. Stakeholders should be educated on the significance of IPSAS in promoting financial transparency. Public sector entities should adopt modern accounting software that aligns with IPSAS principles for improved financial reporting.

5.5 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

While this study provides valuable insights, certain limitations must be acknowledged: The study focused on only Accra, limiting generalizability to other regions. The study primarily used quantitative methods; future research could incorporate qualitative insights to gain deeper understanding. Future research should conduct comparative studies between IPSAS-adopting and non-adopting countries. Investigate the long-term impact of IPSAS on financial sustainability in public institutions. Assess how technology and digital transformation can further enhance IPSAS implementation.

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